

Mr. Speaker, during a speech at the Republican National Convention in 2004, President Bush said, "In a new term, we will all lead an aggressive effort to enroll millions of poor children who are eligible but not signed up for the government's health insurance programs." But instead, the President just minutes ago vetoed health insurance for ten million low income children.

The President's objections were without merit and did not warrant a veto. The bill does not expand the CHIP program: instead it maintains current eligibility requirements while enrolling more uninsured children. It is not a move toward "socialized health care;" states will continue to receive funding through block grants, which nearly all states use to enroll kids in private health insurance plans. And this investment in the health of our nation's children is fully paid for, unlike the President's ongoing Iraq funding requests.

Mr. Speaker, I sincerely had hoped the President would have a change of heart and fulfill his promise to enroll more children in the CHIP program. But he failed to do so. Now, every member of this Congress must vote to override the President to provide children's health care.